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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY VATICAN
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING

S E C R E T STATE 009311

NOFORN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/29/2035
TAGS: [PINR](#) [KIRF](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [CH](#) [VT](#)
SUBJECT: (C) CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH THE VATICAN
(C-AL9-02596)

REF: A. VATICAN 000061
[1](#)B. VATICAN 000128

Classified By: ELISSA G. PITTERLE, DIRECTOR, INR/OPS

[1](#)1. (S/NF) WASHINGTON ANALYSTS GREATLY APPRECIATE REFTELS FOR PROVIDING INSIGHT INTO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHINA AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. IN PARTICULAR, REF B SUGGESTS THAT BEIJING'S WILLINGNESS TO PERMIT CARITAS' CHARITY WORK, EVEN WHEN ENGAGING WITH THE UNDERGROUND CHURCH, IS A SIGN OF CHINA'S GROWING BELIEF IN THE VALUE OF CHARITABLE SERVICES PROVIDED BY RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES. WE STILL LACK INFORMATION, HOWEVER, ON CHINESE LEADERSHIP'S STRATEGIC THINKING TOWARD RELATIONS WITH THE VATICAN. AS TIME AND RESOURCES ALLOW, ANY ADDITIONAL INSIGHT FROM POST ON THE VATICAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD BEIJING, ALONG THE LINES OF THE QUESTIONS POSED IN PARAS A-C, WOULD HELP OUR ANALYSIS ON THIS SUBJECT. MANY THANKS, AND WARM REGARDS.

[1](#)A. (S/REL TO USA, AUS, CAN, GBR, NZL) WHAT CONCESSIONS WOULD THE VATICAN BE WILLING TO MAKE TO BEIJING IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS, AND WHAT ARE THE REDLINES THE VATICAN WILL NOT CROSS?

[1](#)B. (S/REL TO USA, AUS, CAN, GBR, NZL) DOES THE VATICAN STILL PLAN TO DROP FORMAL RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN IN FAVOR OF THE PRC, AND IF SO, WHAT IS THE VATICAN'S TIMEFRAME FOR ANY CHANGES? WHICH VATICAN OFFICIALS ARE MOST INVOLVED OR INFLUENTIAL REGARDING THIS ISSUE? WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF POPE BENEDICT XVI'S INVOLVEMENT?

[1](#)C. (S/REL TO USA, AUS, CAN, GBR, NZL) WHO ARE CHINA'S KEY VATICAN CONTACTS?

[1](#)2. (U) PLEASE CITE C-AL9-02596 IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF REPORTING IN RESPONSE TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS.

CLINTON